

HABS No. ID-110

Hornet Ranger Station
Payette National Forest
National Forest Road No. 50002
Council Vicinity
Adams County
Idaho

HABS
ID
2-COUNTY,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Western Region
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California 94107

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HORNET RANGER STATION

HABS No. ID-110

Location: Payette National Forest
15 miles southwest of Council
0.2 miles north of Washington County line
National Forest Road No. 50002, at Mill Creek
Adams County
Idaho

U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute Hornet SW, ID, quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator coordinates:
11.529300.4965000

Present Owner: Payette National Forest
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1026 Park Street
McCall, Idaho 83638

Present Use: Abandoned

Statement of Significance:

In 1905, the remote site contained a dwelling and barn of frame construction. These buildings were used as an early ranger station and administrative outpost of the Weiser National Forest, established May 25, 1905 (Hockaday 1968:41). The Hornet Ranger Station forms important historical associations with two federal agencies: the U.S. Forest Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Both of these agencies were instrumental in the regional development of the West during the first half of the twentieth century.

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DESCRIPTION

The name "Hornet" was applied to the ranger station in ca. 1906, the beginning of its use by the Weiser National Forest. "Hornet" is derived from the many hornet nests generally found along the streams and in the valleys. The creek by that name is part of the Salmon River drainage (Boone 1988:184).

The Hornet Ranger Station complex presently contains nine primary buildings and six secondary structures. A uniformity of style was maintained as per the construction guidelines of the U.S. Forest Service. The extant buildings, with the exception of the bunkhouse and two storage buildings, were constructed during 1933-1934 by cooperating personnel of the Forest Service and the CCC.

A gasoline and pump shed (HABS No. ID-110-Q), built in 1934, was removed in 1990. A four-horse barn (HABS No. ID-110-P) was built in 1934; it was relocated in 1991 and is currently preserved at the district headquarters yard in Council. The Bunkhouse (HABS No. ID-110-E) was built ca. 1941. A Storage Building (HABS No. ID-110-F), and a Shed (HABS No. ID-110-H) were added to the complex ca. 1960.

The setting of Hornet Ranger Station has remained essentially unchanged since the 1930s. The complex is contained within a rectangular-shaped parcel roughly measuring 650 feet (E-W) by 175 feet (N-S). All site features are located between 4,020 and 4,035 feet above mean sea level along the north bank of Mill Creek.

The extant buildings are oriented to face approximately South. Placement of individual structures within the complex was determined according to U.S. Forest Service Region 4 guidelines.

Original site selection was based primarily upon the fact that the locale contained a frame dwelling and barn. The facilities became the property of the U.S. Forest Service when the Weiser National Forest was created in 1905. Initially, the complex was administered as a facility of the Weiser National Forest; it was consolidated into the reorganized Payette National Forest in 1944.

CONTEXTUAL HISTORY

Conditions in Idaho prior to the creation of the first Federal "forest reserves" were similar to those throughout the United States. The Act of March 3, 1891 fixed the authority of the President to "set apart and reserve" the public forests. The law of June 4, 1897, stated the objectives of the legislation:

No public forest reservation shall be established, except to improve and protect the forest within the reservation, or for the purpose of securing favorable conditions of water flows, and to furnish a continuous supply of timber for the use and necessities of citizens of the United States [Carhart 1959:11].

Active management and development of the forest reserves began under the so-called Organic Act of June 4, 1897. This act led to the development of specific policy to manage the forests and appropriated funding for the first forest rangers (Tweed 1980:1).

The management objectives of the reserves became clearer after the organization of the U.S. Forest Service in 1905. The reserves were shifted from the responsibility of the General Land Office to the Bureau of Forestry, renamed Forest Service (Tweed 1980:2).

In effect, the "forest reserves" became national forests (Carhart 1959:17). Major administrative improvements resulted from the creation of the U.S. Forest Service. A decentralized authority attracted a dedicated force of young foresters on a mission of public good. The new forest service was the embodiment of its chief's philosophy (Allin 1982:37).

The terms National Forests and Forest Service symbolized Chief Gifford Pinchot's philosophy that public forest lands were to be utilized and not merely reserved. Furnishing reasonable amounts of free wood to residents in the vicinity of the reserves, allowing logging, grazing, and water power development under regulation, and controlling fire, erosion, and pilfering so that the forests would remain productive and renew themselves were his principal concerns [Tweed 1980:2].

It was within this national setting that the forest lands in Idaho were first reserved. Initially, there was very little sentiment in favor of establishing reserves in Idaho. Apparently, the Idaho majority was not alarmed by the cutting of timber, effects of grazing, and recurring fire and floods (Hockaday 1968:26).

CONTEXTUAL HISTORY (cont.)

When the Idaho reserves were first organized in 1902, only a few residents were in favor. A great number openly opposed the Forest Service; the newspapers were often antagonistic. Stockmen, especially woolgrowers, passed a number of resolutions condemning any regulations of the forest lands (ibid.).

A dominant obstacle in regulating livestock in western forests was the character of the stockmen themselves. The Idaho stockmen were no exception. They had fought against formidable odds in establishing their right to the range. "Let the rangers try to enforce regulations; men who hung rustlers forthwith could handle a few greenhorn officials trying to enforce regulations" (Carhart 1959:18).

Forests of West-Central Idaho

The Weiser National Forest, which originally contained the Hornet Ranger Station, was established on May 25, 1905. It was created by the combination of two former reserves; the Seven Devils and the Little Salmon.

Additional land in the region became the Payette National Forest, organized on June 3, 1905. The Idaho National Forest was created on July 1, 1908, having been subtracted from the original Payette National Forest (Hockaday 1968:33).

The town of Weiser, from the beginning (1906), was the headquarters of the Supervisor of the Weiser National Forest. Meadows was the first headquarters of the Idaho National Forest, established in 1908. The headquarters was moved to McCall in 1909. It became the office of the Supervisor of the newly reorganized Payette National Forest after its consolidation with the Weiser and Idaho in 1944 (ibid.).

In 1907, the newly organized Weiser Forest had a field force of 10 men. In addition to two assistant rangers, the supervisor hired "guards" to patrol the remote back country of the district. Hornet Ranger Station was among the first seven Weiser units of that type facility being occupied in 1907. The Ranger Station also functioned as "guard quarters" and, prior to 1934, consisted of a frame dwelling and a barn (Hockaday 1968:41).

For \$60 a month, a guard had to furnish two horses, saddle, pack outfit, and board himself and his horses... About 150,000 sheep and 25,000 cattle and horses grazed on the Reserve [Weiser]... [Supervisor J.B. Lafferty's staff] had to prevent unpermitted grazing along 400 miles of unfenced boundary--look after applicants for timber and protect the Reserve from fire (Hockaday 1968:30).

CONTEXTUAL HISTORY (cont.)

Throughout the early years, the Weiser Forest was beset with problems common to all the remote forests. In addition to monitoring grazing and timber use, 1906 legislation ("June 11th Act") authorized homestead entries which further strained the under-budgeted administrations. The lack of roads and communication made a difficult job almost impossible (ibid.).

By 1930, the Forest Service in general had experienced progress in fire protection and timber management. Other advances were achieved in landscape planning and recreational development. The early years of the Great Depression placed further constraints upon funding requests (Tweed 1980:16).

The CCC Era 1933-1941

A few days after the inauguration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt as President on March 4, 1933, he announced his plan for a "conservation army." Among the rush of special legislation which was passed to cope with a severe economic crisis was a program for public works in forest, water, and soil conservation, approved March 31. As a result, on April 17, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was organized and the first 200 men were sent to camp. By July, nearly 300,000 men had enrolled, three-quarters of them working in forestry camps supervised by the Forest Service (ibid.).

The arrival of Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) funding and Roosevelt's CCC "forestry army" dramatically changed the course of the national forests. The "conservation" programs brought expansion to the forest administration. The smokejumpers, landscape architects, and recreation planners are important vestiges of ECW allocations. In central Idaho districts, funding and manpower was used initially to construct administrative facilities (Hockaday 1968:41).

In the Weiser Forest, priority for using ECW funding and CCC labor was assigned to permanent improvements. This included Ranger Stations, Fire Lookouts, and other administrative buildings. ECW/CCC allotments were also used for range improvements, roads and trails, and recreation facilities (Hockaday 1968:43).

Forest Service spending during the CCC era peaked in fiscal year 1936-37 and was less in each succeeding year of the program. The 1940-41 budget was less than 60 percent of the record budget four years previous. In 1936, as many as 644 CCC camps were operated in the National Forests. By 1941, the number had been cut in half to 322; the program was abolished in 1942 (Tweed 1980:26).

CONTEXTUAL HISTORY (cont.)

Hornet Ranger Station

In 1933, another factor in the improvement of the Hornet Ranger Station project was the National Industrial Recovery Act of June 16, 1933. Through its provisions of public works spending, the Forest Service realized another source of funding. In 1933, this program provided nearly \$16 million allocated for "permanent improvements" alone (Tweed 1980:16).

For Region 4, which included the Weiser Forest, this translated to an opportunity to improve facilities in districts which needed funding. The improvements at the Hornet Ranger Station were among the first to be completed (1934) as part of the CCC program (Hockaday 1968:41).

Although the construction project at Hornet Ranger Station was not completed until 1934, several key tasks were accomplished in 1933. The first was administrative and involved the combination of the Bear and Hornet districts; the name and the headquarters remained at Hornet (Hockaday 1968:45).

In 1933, at the Region 4 Headquarters in Ogden, Utah, site planning for a wide array of projects was already underway. A new Building Construction Manual outlined guidelines and specified construction techniques and plans. A version of the comprehensive document was printed in 1934 under the auspices of R.H. Rutledge, Regional Forester; it was revised in 1935 and remained in use for many years.

Materials were purchased in 1933 for specific improvements at Hornet Ranger Station including the Ranger Dwelling, Woodshed/Cellar, Office, Garage, Barn, and Blacksmith Shop. From correspondence, it is difficult to decipher exactly how much was accomplished that year. It is clear that some work was started, and the fencing was installed in 1933 (USDA Historical Files 1933).

At any rate, the structures mentioned above were completed in 1934 along with the privy, oil house (gasoline shed), and the bridges and concrete walkway (Hockaday 1968:41). A "Landscape Planting Plan" for the residential portion of the site was filed in 1936. Projects of this type were among the early efforts of Forest Service staff who worked in the positions of Landscape Architect and Recreational Planner (USDA Historical Files 1936).

The remaining primary structures, the Bunkhouse, Storage Building, and Shed were all added to the site during the years 1941-1960. Telephone service was added prior to 1941; electricity was extended to the complex in 1950 (USDA Historical Files 1941, 1950).

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original Architectural Drawings

No specific plans for the Hornet Ranger Station complex were located during this study. Several of the plans from the USDA Forest Service Building Construction Manual, Region Four (Rutledge 1934) were modified for use at the Hornet Ranger Station.

B. Early Views

To date, only a few early views have been located for the Hornet Ranger Station complex. Examples of these have been included as "photographic copies" (See INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS).

C. Interviews

To date, no interviews have been completed to document the use of Hornet Ranger Station.

D. Bibliography

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Hockaday, James

1968 History of the Payette National Forest. USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region, Ogden, Utah.

Kingsbury, Lawrence A.

1990 Determination of Significance and Effect, Removal of the Gasoline Tank and Shed at Hornet Ranger Station 10AM127, PY90-406. On file with Payette National Forest, Supervisor's Office, McCall.

Rutledge, R.H. (Regional Forester)

1935 Building Construction Manual, USDA Forest Service, Region Four. U.S. Government Printing Office.

United States Department of Agriculture

nd. Hornet Ranger Station Improvements. Historical file of miscellaneous correspondence and maps 1913-1950. Payette National Forest, McCall District.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Boone, Lalia

1988 Idaho Place Names: A Geographical Dictionary. University of Idaho Press, Moscow.

2. Secondary and published sources (cont.)

Carhart, Arthur H.

1959 The National Forests. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York.

Tweed, William C.

1980 Recreation Site Planning in the National Forests 1891-1942. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated

For more local history, there are several "oldtimers" in the Hornet area including Dale Fisk of Fruitvale, Idaho. Another likely source would be the early newspapers of the Weiser, Council, and McCall areas. A good starting point for archival material is the McCall Public Library.

Specific material relating to the history of the Forest Service in West Central Idaho may be found at the USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Regional Office, Ogden, Utah. The majority of primary government documents relating to the Forest Service may be searched through the data base of the National Archives, Federal Records Center.

Contextual history and the development of the Forest Service may be researched through the holdings of the Forest Service History Center, Washington, D.C. The Bancroft Library, University of California--Berkeley, is another repository of related archival material.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Hornet Ranger Station was operated continuously as an administrative facility of the U.S. Forest Service since 1906. Due to improved roads, modern communications, and staff consolidation, it was determined that the Hornet R.S. facilities were obsolete and should be eliminated.

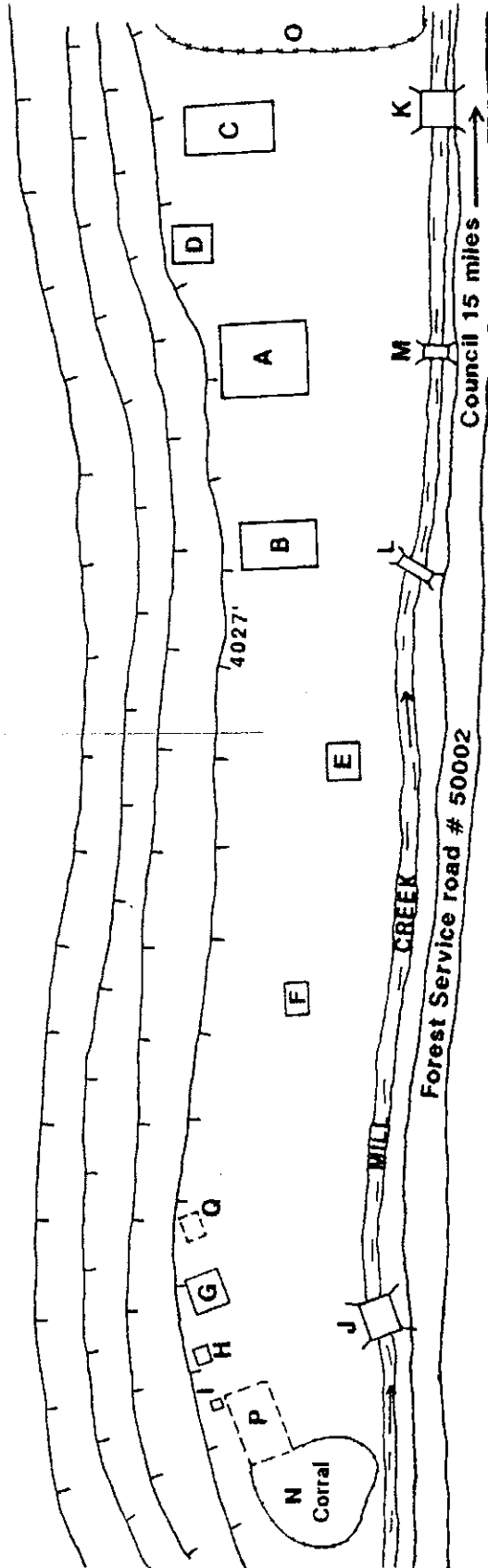
In 1990, A Memorandum of Agreement was signed between the Forest Service and the Idaho Office of Historic Preservation. This document was, in effect, the acknowledgement that the completion of Historic American Building Survey (HABS) documentation would constitute appropriate mitigation prior to the disposal of the Hornet Ranger Station facilities.

During 1991-1993, the photo documentation of the site was assembled. In 1992, the Forest Service contracted with Elliott Research Associates of Three Rivers, California to assist in preparing the written documentation and the final HABS submission.

HORNET RANGER STATION

HABS No. ID-110

UTM ZONE 11 529300m.E. 4965000m.N.



LEGEND

SCALE 1/8" = 10'

- A Ranger Dwelling
- B Office
- C Garage
- D Woodshed/Cellar
- E Bunkhouse
- F Storage Building
- G Blacksmith Shop

- H Shed
- I Privy
- J,K Bridge
- L,M Footbridge
- N Corral
- O Fence (barbed wire)
- Contours

- [X] Structures removed

- P Barn

- Q Gasoline and Pump Shed

